

MEDIA RELEASE

Andrew Cripps MP

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Queensland

Member for Hinchinbrook

20 March 2012

Ag industry applauds LNP policy commitments

LNP Shadow Minister for Agriculture Andrew Cripps said the agriculture industry had widely applauded and welcomed the CanDo agriculture policies released during the election campaign.

“Growing Queensland’s Agriculture sector is a major part of the LNP’s plan to build a stronger four pillar economy, alongside Tourism, Construction and Resources,” Mr Cripps said.

“Our comprehensive Agriculture Strategy to double production by 2040 and a number of policies to back that Strategy have received strong endorsements from peak industry groups during the election campaign, and they are filtering through to the grass roots.

“Our policies to undertake the most comprehensive Land Audit ever in Queensland and provide an additional 15 Biosecurity Officers, for example, attracted strong industry interest.

“**Growcom CEO Alex Livingstone** acknowledged that:

‘...while the problem also needs to be addressed through education and training, and by promoting agricultural sciences as a worthwhile career path, an increase in biosecurity staff is a good first step’.

“**CANEGROWERS CEO Steve Greenwood** said:

“... the increased resourcing of vital biosecurity services and prioritisation of a reassessment of strategic cropping and land use - correspond directly to CANEGROWERS election policy platforms.”

“Our policies to provide an extra \$3 million for targeted Agriculture R&D, and a better skilled Agriculture workforce were also strongly supported,” Mr Cripps said.

“**AgForce’s Brett Finlay** welcomed it as:

‘encouraging to see a focus on agricultural R&D from the LNP’ and said AgForce ‘will continue to push for greater investments in this critical area’.

“On the LNP’s policy to provide an extra \$3 million to improve awareness of agricultural careers and to better target training through schools, agricultural colleges and universities, **AgForce’s Mr Finlay** said:

‘This is a critical area of need to alleviate the shortage of skilled farm workers and agri-professionals, and again we will send a message to all parties of the need for ongoing funding injections of this calibre to make a real difference’.

“**Growcom** warmly welcomed the commitment by the LNP of \$500,000 for the Horticulture Workforce Plan as part of our \$3.5 million workforce planning and training package, and our

policy to provide \$4.6 million over four years to fund sugar research by the BSES has strong support in the sugar industry,” Mr Cripps said.

“CANEGROWERS CEO Steve Greenwood said:

“...it certainly is a big step in the right direction and I congratulate the LNP for demonstrating its understanding and support for our industry.”

“Australian Sugar Milling Council Chairman Quinton Hildebrand welcomed it as:

“...a clear commitment by the LNP to the future of the Australian sugar industry. It would provide some much needed certainty around ongoing investment for the sector while providing additional impetus for the industry to achieve its targeted sustainable growth in production to 36 million tonnes”.

“Only the LNP has a strong plan to double Queensland food production by 2040.

“It’s time for a change. It’s time to get Queensland Back on Track,” Mr Cripps said.

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